

Today's *Wall Street Journal* editorial: "The Honduras Mess"

After nearly three months in exile, Manuel Zelaya, the deposed president of Honduras, made a stealth return to Tegucigalpa on Monday, taking sanctuary in the Brazilian embassy. He is now using this diplomatic sanctuary to demand reinstatement and stir up his supporters in the streets. This is a dangerous moment, and if violence breaks out the U.S. will bear no small part of the blame.

Mr. Zelaya was deposed and deported this summer after he agitated street protests to support a rewrite of the Honduran constitution so he could serve a second term. The constitution strictly prohibits a change in the term-limits provision. On multiple occasions he was warned to desist, and on June 28 the Supreme Court ordered his arrest.

Every major Honduran institution supported the move, even members in Congress of his own political party, the Catholic Church and the country's human rights ombudsman. To avoid violence the Honduran military escorted Mr. Zelaya out of the country. In other words, his removal from office was legal and constitutional, though his ejection from the country gave the false appearance of an old-fashioned Latin American coup.

The U.S. has since come down solidly on the side of Mr. Zelaya. While it has supported negotiations and called for calm, President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have both insisted that Honduras must ignore Mr. Zelaya's transgressions and their own legal processes and restore him as president. The U.S. has gone so far as to cut off aid, threaten Honduran assets in the U.S. and pull visas to enter the U.S. from the independent judiciary. The U.S. has even threatened not to recognize presidential elections previously scheduled for November unless Mr. Zelaya is first brought back to power-even though he couldn't run again.

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